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policy, although it stands high above that of most princes and statesmen of his day, Italian as well as foreign, in honesty and consistency. During the last ten years of his life, he clung immovably to the necessity of preserving peace and concord with that national consciousness which corresponded to the idea entertained at that day, and which it would be unjust to blame because it differed from our own. His internal policy has been most severely blamed for the changes made in the constitution for the purpose of increasing his personal authority, and the corruption of which he was guilty in order to obtain unbounded control over the finances of the State.

In conclusion, Von Reumont says that the greatest evil perhaps in Lorenzo's government was in the increasing incongruity between the outer form and the real power, in the removal of authority from its legal centre, whereby both justice and moderation were put in peril. The personal element gave the decision in the policy of the State as well as in its finances and justice. If Lorenzo's government on the whole was free from the excesses which marked that of Cosimo, it was due to the change in the times as well as to the disposition of Lorenzo. "He wished to rule, but he was no tyrant. In the first place, he was too sagacious and knew too well the character and traditions of the people; on the other hand, his was a nature too rich and magnanimous, too much in need of friendship, too fond of enjoyment. In short, he was too much a Florentine citizen."

Such, in brief, is the author's estimate of the most remarkable man of a remarkable period, a period the influence of which is still felt in literature and art; and which will never cease to attract and puzzle the student of political and social history.

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5.—*The Methods of Ethics.* By HENRY SIDGWICK, M. A., Lecturer and late Fellow of Trinity College, Cambridge. London. Macmillan & Co. 1874. 8vo. pp. xxiii. and 473.

MR. SIDGWICK has given, in his table of contents, so complete an account of his aim and mode of procedure, that nothing more is needed here than a brief outline. What he undertakes is a critical review of the various methods by which the common-sense of mankind (or perhaps we ought rather to say, of England and America) justifies to itself the fundamental assumption of Ethics; and to exhibit impartially the conclusions to which they logically lead, without any final judgment of their conflicting claims.

The fundamental assumption is, that there is something under any

given circumstances which it is right or reasonable to do, and that this may be known. That it may be known ; for if we say that it cannot be known but only felt, then of course ethical reasoning stops, and right and wrong cease to have any meaning as distinct from what is agreeable to the momentary impulse. If, on the other hand, there is any universal end of conduct, any Supreme Good, that can be known, it must be, however difficult, yet possible to state it, not merely as something to which conduct conforms, but as something to which it *ought* to conform ; in other words, it must be not only consistent but rational. The moral judgments of mankind are commonly attended with (and frequently warped by) emotion ; but if they have any claim to the title of judgments it must be practicable to obtain by reflection, from the fluid mass of opinion, a deposit of clear and precise principles commanding universal acceptance. Nor do the discrepancies of moral codes disprove the possibility of ethical science. They only show that on this as on other subjects the human mind is prone to error, and not that truth is necessarily unattainable. But in order to erect the moral opinions of mankind into scientific axioms, it is necessary to show (1) that they can be stated in clear and precise terms ; (2) that they are really self-evident ; (3) that they do not conflict with any other truth ; (4) that they are supported by a complete "consensus of experts."

The methods of Ethics to which these tests are to be applied are reducible to three : (1) Egoism, or the systematic pursuit by each individual of his own maximum happiness as the supreme good ; (2) Intuitionism, or the appeal to a sense of what is in itself right or reasonable to be done, without regard to consequences ; (3) Utilitarianism, or the adoption of the greatest happiness of the greatest number, as the end of conduct.

1. Assuming the rational end of life, for each individual, to be his own maximum happiness, common-sense does not, on reflection, warrant the belief that happiness can in general be best secured either by giving free play to our impulses, or by regulating them in accordance with a careful comparison of experienced pleasures. We continually discover illusion and error in the attempt to form any standard of pleasures, either by appropriating the experience of others, or by inferring future pleasures from past. And this seems inevitable ; for although every sentient individual must be the final judge of the pleasantness or painfulness of his own feelings while he feels them, yet for that very reason he cannot know the feelings of another person or of another moment. His present experience does not enable him to predict anything about a feeling which he

does not feel. Nor even if we could succeed in arranging pleasures and pains on a scale of preferableness, would it follow that happiness could infallibly be secured by the direct pursuit of it. Often it seems to be more conducive to happiness to follow the leadings of natural instinct; and the intrusion of prudential considerations to be suicidal. Yet, on the other hand, it would be paradoxical to put forward, as the *dernier mot* of ethical philosophy, a negation of the natural supremacy of Reason over impulse. The method of Egoism, then, does not seem of itself to lead to any secure conclusions.

2. Intuitionism. The belief that what seems right to us would be right for all persons under similar circumstances is certainly a condition of right conduct, but it does not follow that what we think right is so. Conscientious persons are continually disagreeing as to what ought to be done, and it seems moreover at least doubtful whether in a case where another is about to do what he thinks right, while we believe it to be wrong, we ought to attempt to urge him to realize objective rightness against his conviction. No doubt we have distinct moral impulses, claiming authority over all others, and prescribing or forbidding kinds of conduct as to which there is a rough general agreement, at least among educated persons of the same age and country. But the objects of these impulses do not admit of being scientifically determined by any reflective analysis of common-sense. The notions of Justice, Benevolence, Veracity, etc., are not emptied of significance for us because we find it impossible to define them with precision, but the attempt to elevate the Morality of Common Sense into a system of scientific Ethics brings its inevitable imperfections into prominence, without helping us to remove them.

3. Utilitarianism avoids the hopeless attempt to define the *summum bonum* as an objective relation intuitively perceived, between conscious minds and each other, or the universe generally, and substitutes for it the consideration of Happiness or desirable feeling as the ultimately and intrinsically Good, other things being good as means to this end. If we make Perfection the end, apart from the happiness accompanying and resulting from it, we cannot say that it is ultimately and intrinsically desirable, because, from the supposition, it is not felt to be desirable, and there is no other way of knowing what is desirable but by feeling it. We do indeed find in Common Sense an aversion to admit Happiness to be the sole ultimate end and standard of right conduct. This aversion, however, is due to the mistake of supposing Happiness to mean *Our Happiness* as opposed to, or at least distinct from, *Universal Happiness*. Reason gives me no warrant for considering *my* happiness intrinsically more desirable

than the happiness of any other person, still less, than that of all other persons. I am to count for one, and for no more than one, in the sum of mankind, or, perhaps, of sentient beings. Utilitarianism, then, accepts the Intuitionist position, that there is something under any given circumstances which we are bound as rational beings to do, and that we can know intuitively what it is. But in place of the precept to "do our duty," which leaves us without any means whereby to determine what our duty is, it substitutes the criterion of happiness, that is, the tendency to increase the pleasures or diminish the pains of mankind at large, or perhaps of sentient creatures generally, as the test of conduct. This is indeed the test to which mankind do and must appeal for decision in the case of the divergence of any respectable section of the community from the received moral code. The first principle of Utilitarianism, that the fulfilment of my desires is not to be regarded by me as intrinsically more desirable than the equal satisfaction of any one else, is the most certain and comprehensive of intuitions, and most of the others seem to be most thoroughly understood when considered as partial and imperfect applications of it. This does not mean that the perception of rightness has always been consciously derived from perceptions of Utility, but only that the morality of Common Sense is instinctively utilitarian, and that we have in it in fact a body of utilitarian doctrine which only needs to be rectified and carried out by more strict reference to its implicit principle.

But it is one thing to admit the principle of Utility, and another thing to feel a decisive impulse to act in accordance with it. As a fact this impulse is not always sufficiently felt, and it is because of this fact that Utilitarians dwell on what they call the Sanctions of their rules; that is, the pleasures to be gained or pains to be avoided by the individual conforming to them; and that Society endeavors by the contrivance of rewards and punishments to replace or to reinforce the spontaneous impulse. But is it possible to demonstrate on empirical grounds the inseparable connection between Utilitarian Duty and the greatest happiness of the individual? It seems not, for Duty may call upon him to sacrifice his life, with all demonstrable possibilities of happiness for himself and for those whose happiness depends on his, to the general good. No doubt social virtue is in general conducive to happiness, but there is no empirical proof that they universally coincide.

If, however, we can conceive the Utilitarian Code as the Law of God, and feel convinced that he has announced his intention of rewarding those who obey his commands, and punishing the disobe-

dient, — then indeed we have an inducement which is of course adequate. This hypothesis cannot be verified by experience, indeed it contradicts experience, for it declares that the moral order which we see imperfectly realized in this actual world is yet actually perfect. Yet without some such assumption we feel that a universe so constituted that Good for the Individual is not ultimately identified with Universal Good, is fundamentally irrational. This, to be sure, is only saying that unless we can obtain such a premise, Ethical Science is a failure, and the operations of Practical Reason illusory.

With this suggestion, that Ethical Science can be constructed only on a basis borrowed from Theology, Mr. Sidgwick leaves the matter, without deciding whether upon such a basis it can be constructed. This decision would require, he says, a complete discussion of the ultimate basis of philosophic certainty; the ground upon which we assent to propositions as true. Without entering upon this discussion, however, it seems clear that if, as Mr. Sidgwick seems to assume, our knowledge of Good is necessarily empirical, if the only proof that anything is desirable is that it is desired, "the existence of these however elevated desires does not furnish a proof of the existence of their object; indeed, can scarcely afford a strong presumption in favor of this conclusion, considering the large proportion of human desires that experience shows to be destined to disappointment." Indeed, we may go farther, and say that it would be a great misfortune if they were not disappointed, for Happiness is a collective name for an endless variety of objects, often incompatible with each other, which different people suppose to be desirable. It is impossible to imagine any definite state of facts, any mode of life, occupation, complex of circumstances, that would be acknowledged by everybody to be the best possible; and even if such an agreement were by chance hit upon, it could not endure, and ought not to endure, for it would mean the stagnation of thought and the cessation of all moral progress.

It is vain then to expect that mankind will ever attain to definitive unalterable opinions about what is desirable, and it would not be on the whole a blessing if they were persuaded that a divine sanction is attached to those opinions which they have attained.

But admitting the impossibility of raising our stock notions about conduct to the height of scientific axioms, does it follow that it is impossible for each one of us to know for certain in any given case what it is right or reasonable for him to do? Is there not a confusion underlying the whole of Mr. Sidgwick's argument, between our

opinions as to what is on the whole desirable, and the intimations of Conscience as to what *must* be done in a case peculiar to ourselves? Those general considerations are of immense importance and well worth all the pains we can give to them, for on them the working of the social machinery depends. But they necessarily start from abstractions, from what is true in the average case, as to people in general, or in the long run, and so cannot arrive at certainty as to a particular case, but only at probability. Now it is in one sense true that we act always upon probabilities, since we are not infallible, — but it does not follow that our duty is only probable to us and not certain. For the assent of Conscience is not given to an empirical fact, as to which we may be mistaken, as to whose bearings at any rate we *must* be mistaken, that is, imperfectly informed — but to a logical necessity, namely, what we ought to do, *taking our facts for granted*, — and this need not be doubtful or liable to change. Conscience does not command us to be infallible, but only to act for the best; this is always in our power, and so acting we need never repent what we have done. There is, then, nothing irrational or exorbitant in its categorical imperative, — nothing that requires a miracle or a “consensus of experts” for its support. Is the command too vague? We shall not make it more definite by putting it into a general formula which is just as applicable to one person or one state of circumstances as to another. The objection to making Utility the criterion in Morals is that in the effort to be comprehensive it ignores its fact, and explains the absolute, uncompromising tone of the oracle within the breast by assuring us that it is only one voice out of many, none of them quite agreeing, and all to be equally regarded. To explain the sense of Duty as the resultant of all the impulses of the average man or woman in their ordinary moments, is like explaining Niagara by analysis of the water at its foot. It is the *fall* that makes Niagara, not the chemical constituents of the drops, or their behavior in the pool below. It is the height above the level of ordinary life and its experiences that gives momentum to the act of Conscience, and the attempt to extract the notion of Obligation from the notion of Utility can issue only in mystifications like the setting up of Happiness in general, which is the happiness of nobody in particular, as the Supreme Good, and then trying to supply to this empty abstraction a content which may give it attraction.

This summary discussion of results necessarily leaves out of sight what is perhaps most admirable in Mr. Sidgwick's book, the unwearyed carefulness of expression, still more the urbanity and candor, the

Aristotelian impartiality, "the pure air of scientific curiosity," — most refreshing after the heat and dogmatism of much that calls itself "scientific" philosophizing. To get philosophical problems discussed in this tone is the first condition of that hearty co-operation of men of different schools which Philosophy just now stands much in need of.

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6. — *The Map of Europe by Treaty, showing the various Political and Territorial changes since the General Peace of 1814.* By EDWARD HERTSLET, C. B., Librarian and Keeper of the Papers, Foreign Office. London: Butterworth, 7 Fleet Street. 1875.

NOTHING is so thoroughly satisfactory to any one who ever uses books, nothing gives so much real and enduring comfort as a good collection of works of reference. Works of reference in their highest form are not the encyclopædias, those vast collections of which the first volume is antiquated when the last is published, but works of enduring nature, which serve the student for a lifetime. There are but comparatively few of these monuments of modern research which unite the qualities of excellence, accuracy, and endurance. "L'Art de vérifier les dates" is as valuable now as when it was published nearly a century ago; Du Cange will probably never be out of date; the "Biographie Universelle" is a source of never-failing satisfaction; and if to books such as these be added the more compendious and cheaper works which maintain the connection with the current year, the desired and precious collection is complete.

Mr. Hertslet's book is a valuable addition to our libraries of reference. It not only presents with accuracy and in excellent form the important material for one branch of history, but it covers a period of which there is practically no history for the present generation, and is therefore of double value. Mr. Hertslet's opportunities have been the best possible for the work he has undertaken, and so far as a cursory examination can be relied on, he has performed his task with care and thoroughness. All the European treaties from 1814 to 1875, inclusive, are given, and each is preceded by a head-note, to borrow the legal term, explaining the substance of the document. The work is still further enriched by the insertion of all the Declarations of War, Guaranties of Independence and Neutrality, Decrees of Annexation, and the corresponding protests. All treaties and papers referred to, of an earlier date than 1814, are also given, so that the documentary history of every treaty is complete. The vol-